

STATEMENT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
BEFORE THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

OCTOBER 8, 1987

INTRODUCTION

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS, I AM PLEASED TO APPEAR HERE TODAY AND SHARE WITH YOU MY THOUGHTS ON AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT: PERSONS WHO FLEE FROM THE COMMUNIST BLOC TO THE UNITED STATES AND HOW OUR COUNTRY MIGHT BETTER TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THEY HAVE TO OFFER.

LET ME BEGIN BY DISCUSSING BRIEFLY THE ONE AREA TO WHICH I CAN SPEAK OFFICIALLY AS THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE: THE VERY SMALL FRACTION OF THESE PEOPLE WHO ARE OF INTELLIGENCE INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, OVER WHICH I AS DIRECTOR PRESIDE, HAS A SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY AND COLLECT INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION AND ADDRESS OTHER INTELLIGENCE CONCERNS WITH RESPECT TO THESE PERSONS. THE SYSTEM IS COMPREHENSIVE, VERY ACTIVE AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF OUR WORK IS, OF COURSE, CLASSIFIED AND CANNOT BE DISCUSSED IN THIS FORUM. I CAN SAY, THOUGH, THAT I AM SATISFIED THE COMMUNITY IS WORKING VERY HARD AND, INDEED, HAS MADE IMPROVEMENTS IN EXISTING EFFORTS.

TODAY, HOWEVER, THE SUBCOMMITTEE FOCUSES NOT ON THESE FEW INDIVIDUALS BUT ON THE LARGER GROUP: THOSE PERSONS NOT OF SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE IS NOT OFFICIALLY CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEALING WITH THIS LARGER GROUP. NONETHELESS, I AM PLEASED TO SHARE MY THOUGHTS ON THE SUBJECT WITH YOU.

THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED

I WILL REFER TO THIS LARGER CATEGORY OF PERSONS AS "RESETTLEMENT CASES", RATHER THAN AS "DEFECTORS," DUE TO THE FACT THAT FOR US IN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY THE WORD "DEFECTOR" IS A TERM WITH A VERY LIMITED, SPECIFIC MEANING.

RESETTLEMENT CASES HAVE CHOSEN TO COME HERE OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL AND INITIATIVE, JUST AS HAVE SO MANY MILLIONS OF IMMIGRANTS THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY. BEING HUMAN, THEIR MOTIVATIONS, AMBITIONS AND CAPABILITIES VARY WIDELY. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, TWO CHARACTERISTICS WHICH ALL SEEM TO SHARE. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY ARE DISSATISFIED WITH THE RESTRICTIVE SOCIETIES FROM WHICH THEY HAVE COME AND LOOK FORWARD TO ENJOYING THE LIBERTIES WE TAKE FOR GRANTED. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE DIFFICULTIES OF READJUSTMENT TO LIFE IN A NEW SOCIETY IN WHICH THE MORES, CUSTOMS, LANGUAGE, RULES AND REGULATIONS ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED.

THE LATTER POINT MAY SEEM APPARENT BUT I THINK IT DESERVES SOME EMPHASIS. AMERICANS WHO HAVE CHANGED THEIR RESIDENCES WITHIN THE UNITED STATES ARE AWARE OF THE SIMPLE FRUSTRATIONS INVOLVED: DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF TRASH COLLECTION; DIFFERENT WAYS OF CALCULATING STATE INCOME TAXES; VARIANCES IN WHETHER RENTALS NORMALLY INCLUDE REFRIGERATORS AND STOVES, AND SO ON. THIS IN OUR OWN COUNTRY. THINK HOW DIFFICULT IT IS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE ATTEMPTING TO BUILD A NEW LIFE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH ALL THE RULES HAVE CHANGED AND THE LANGUAGE IS DIFFICULT TO SPEAK AND UNDERSTAND. ALSO, I NOTE THAT ON OCCASION THOSE WHO COME HERE HAVE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND PLANS THAT SIMPLY DO NOT MATERIALIZE.

THE GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZES ROUTINELY AND TO A VERY MODEST EXTENT THE INITIAL RESETTLEMENT EXPENSES OF MANY RESETTLEMENT CASES. THESE FUNDS ARE DISTRIBUTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO THE VOLUNTARY AGENCY WHICH SPONSORED THE INDIVIDUAL. BEYOND THIS ASSISTANCE, WHICH COVERS ONLY THE FIRST WEEKS FOLLOWING ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES, THERE IS NO ORGANIZED SYSTEM THROUGH WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO SUCH INDIVIDUALS.

FOR HELPING TO SMOOTH THE TRANSITION AND ADJUSTMENT FOR SO MANY OF THE RESETTLEMENT CASES AND THEIR FAMILIES, MUCH CREDIT AND PRAISE IS DUE TO THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHO ASSUME THE OVERWHELMING TASK OF RESETTLING MANY THOUSANDS OF THESE INDIVIDUALS EACH YEAR. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SUBCOMMITTEE WILL HEAR FROM SOME OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TOMORROW.

GIVEN THE RELATIVELY LIMITED RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THEM, THEY ACCOMPLISH A GREAT DEAL.

BEYOND THESE, THERE IS ALSO A ROLE FOR INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS TO PLAY HERE. ANY OF US MAY, AT SOME POINT, HAVE OCCASION TO ENCOUNTER THESE PERSONS IN A WIDE VARIETY OF SETTINGS...AS NEIGHBORS, AS COLLEAGUES IN THE WORKPLACE OR AS FELLOW MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS. IN SUCH INSTANCES, WE SHOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND OFFER ASSISTANCE, SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH AMERICAN LIFE. WHILE THIS MAY SEEM A SMALL THING, IT CAN MEAN A GREAT DEAL TO A PERSON COMING FROM A CLOSED, HIGHLY STRUCTURED, REPRESSIVE SYSTEM TO ONE WHOSE OPENNESS, BREADTH AND FREEDOM OFFER A SENSE OF LIBERATION BUT ALSO A SOMETIMES BEWILDERING RANGE OF CHOICES.

WHAT THESE INDIVIDUALS HAVE TO OFFER

LOOKING BEYOND THE EARLY STAGES OF RESETTLEMENT, THESE INDIVIDUALS HAVE A POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR SOCIETY IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. THEY POSSESS A PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR FORMER CULTURES AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS WHICH THEY COULD PROVIDE TO INTERESTED PARTIES WERE THE EFFORT MADE TO REACH OUT TO THEM. SOME POSSESS UNIQUE LANGUAGE SKILLS, A POINT WHICH I BELIEVE GENERAL ODOM MAY ADDRESS IN MORE DETAIL IN HIS TESTIMONY. POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS OF THESE BENEFITS INCLUDE: ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, SCHOLARS, CIVIC GROUPS, UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES AND, IN CERTAIN CASES, GOVERNMENT.

SOMETIMES, HOWEVER, THERE IS A PROBLEM IN MATCHING THESE INDIVIDUALS WITH POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS. AGAIN, THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES PERFORM AN IMPORTANT SERVICE HERE. THESE AGENCIES, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE EVERYWHERE AND IN TOUCH WITH ALL PEOPLE AT ONCE. INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE BY THE POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS TO SEEK OUT SUCH PEOPLE AND OFFER THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THEIR PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS WOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY PROVIDE THEM WITH A SENSE OF SATISFACTION AND ENRICH OUR SOCIETY. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN AREA ON WHICH THE SUBCOMMITTEE MAY WISH TO FOCUS. I NOTE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE, AS THE PRIMARY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS FROM OVERSEAS TO THIS COUNTRY, HAVE IMPORTANT ROLES TO PLAY HERE AND I WOULD ASSUME THE SUBCOMMITTEE PLANS ON CONSULTING THEM.

IN THESE BRIEF OPENING REMARKS I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TOUCH ONLY IN THE MOST GENERAL TERMS ON THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC. THE PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE AS VARIED AND INDIVIDUAL AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT WITH PERSONS OF WIDELY DIFFERING AGES, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS, EXPERIENCE AND FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES. AT THIS POINT, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE TO CONCLUDE MY GENERAL COMMENTS AND RESPOND TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WHICH MAY BE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO YOU.